

## HISTORY OF ATTACK SQUADRON TWELVE

Since its inception as Bomber Fighter Squadron Four in May of 1945 at NAS Alameda, California, the "Flying Ubangia" have had a varied and colorful history. The squadron's first plane, the F4U-4 Corsair was taken to the new home base at NAS Norfolk in April 1946. From there VBF-4 embarked with CAG-4 to the Far East. And while temporarily based ashore at NAB, Kobler, Saipan, the "Kiss of Death Squadron" was redesignated Fighting Squadron Two Able in November 1946. VF-2A participated in the first Pacific Fleet maneuvers to be held following World War II.

In August 1948 at NAS San Diego the squadron designation was changed to Fighting Squadron Twelve following acquisition of new F8F Bearcats. In October the squadron proceeded around the world aboard the USS TARAWA.

Once again on the East Coast, VF-12 made the transition to jets, receiving F2H-2 Banshees while stationed at NAS Jacksonville in September 1950. With this airplane in February 1951 VF-12 became the first Navy day jet fighter squadron to qualify aboard ship at night. In January 1953, it became the first squadron to conduct gunnery on a towed target at 35,000 feet.

The squadron deployed to the Mediterranean in February 1951 aboard the USS CORAL SEA, in April 1952 aboard the USS WASP, and in May 1953 aboard the USS FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT. A Far Eastern cruise aboard the USS MIDWAY followed in December 1954 wherein VF-12 participated in the evacuation of the Tachen Islands in February 1955 and in operation Pointblank, a joint U.S.-Chinese Nationalist exercise.

The present squadron designation, Attack Squadron Twelve, was acquired on its return to NAS Cecil Field in August 1955. The day jet intercept mission of the squadron was changed to special weapons attack and F7U-3 Cutlasses were received in January 1956.

Over a year's shore-based training in attack work prepared VA-12 for receipt of A4D-1 Skyhawks in April 1957. VA-12 won first place in the AIRLANT Weapons Meet in 1959, followed the next year by winning 100 "E" awards for weapons delivery.

Following the transition to the A4C the squadron commenced "Operation Trap" which was an evaluation of the Bullpup missile in 1962. More than 100 missiles were fired and VA-12 logged the first measured Bullpup bulls-eye. 1963 saw VA-12 receive the CNO Safety Award for an accident free year, a feat, repeated in 1965, for which the squadron received a meritorious achievement award. It was also this year that VA-12 received the COMNAVIAIRLANT Battle Readiness Efficiency Pennant and "E" award as the best light jet attack squadron in the Atlantic Fleet.

After transitioning to A4E's, VA-12 drew its first combat assignment in June, 1966, deploying aboard the USS FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT (CVA-42) to Southeast Asia. For the next six months, the squadron participated in the intensive combat operations without damage to a plane or loss of a pilot while logging two thousand combat hours on 1,068 missions. This represents a particularly unique achievement.

In 1967, the squadron transitioned back to its familiar A4C's and returned to its hunting grounds in the Mediterranean with the Sixth Fleet aboard the USS FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT (CVA-42).

Following a brief training cycle at Cecil Field, ATKRON TWELVE sailed again on its tenth Mediterranean cruise aboard the USS SHANGRI-LA (CVS-38).

The year 1969 saw many light attack squadrons at Cecil decommission due to Defense Department spending cutbacks. But the "Flying Ubangis" of VA-12 survived and began training in modified A4C's with more powerful engines in preparation for a second combat deployment of 8½ months to Southeast Asia. Presently commanded by Commander W. R. PETERSEN, USN, Attack Squadron Twelve looks forward to a safe and successful cruise in the Tonkin Gulf.

## LINEAGE

Established as Bomber-Fighter Squadron FOUR (VBF-4) on 12 May 1945  
Redesignated Fighter Squadron TWO A (VF-2A) on 15 November 1946  
Redesignated VF-12 on 2 August 1948  
Redesignated Attack Squadron TWELVE (VA-12) on 1 August 1955, the first squadron to be so designated.  
Disestablished on 1 October 1986

## SQUADRON INSIGNIA AND NICKNAME

The squadron's first insignia was approved by CNO on 19 December 1945. Insignia colors are as follows: circular background is crimson; four of spades card has white background with black markings; the bomb is black with white eyes, mouth, arms and other white markings; gloves are brown; wings are gold and the fire on the bomb fuse is pink.

There are no records indicating VF-2A changed the VBF-4 insignia following redesignation. In 1949, almost a year after VF-2A was redesignated VF-12, the squadron requested approval for a new insignia. CNO approved VF-12's new insignia on 29 September 1949. The theme of the new insignia, "Kiss of Death", is well illustrated. Colors are as follows: background is black; the skull and letters are white; the lips are red and the inner circle and squadron designation is outlined in red.

When VF-12 was redesignated VA-12 the squadron continued to use the "Kiss of Death" insignia. It became a well known insignia and was used by the squadron until its disestablishment in 1986.

The nickname for the squadron was Ubangis. In 1982 the squadron adopted the nickname Clinchers.

## HOME PORT

## ASSIGNMENT DATE

NAS Alameda	12 May 1945
NAAS Watsonville	21 May 1945
NAS Wildwood	9 Jul 1945
NAAS Groton	9 Sep 1945
NAS Norfolk	18 Jan 1946
NAS San Diego (North Island)	15 Jul 1946
NAS Norfolk	21 Feb 1949
NAAS Cecil Field	25 Feb 1949
NAS Jacksonville	24 Mar 1950
NAAS Cecil Field	25 Mar 1951
NAS Jacksonville	7 Oct 1951
NAAS Cecil Field	28 Feb 1952
NAS Jacksonville	16 May 1952
NAS Cecil Field	13 Oct 1952

## COMMANDING OFFICERS

## DATE ASSUMED COMMAND

LTJG Joseph F. Simpson (acting)	12 May 1945
LTJG John S. Tyler (acting)	15 May 1945
LCDR John H. Lackey	19 May 1945
LCDR William L. Conley	6 Oct 1945
LCDR Richard H. Guinn	21 Jun 1947
LCDR W. H. Kilgore (acting)	7 May 1948
LCDR Ronald W. Hoel	2 Jul 1948
LCDR Albert W. Newhall, Jr.	3 May 1949
CDR Brainard T. Macomber	29 Jun 1950

LCDR John M. Breen  
 LCDR Hamilton McWhorter  
 CDR Frederick G. Kidd  
 CDR Paul H. Durand  
 CDR Marshall P. Deputy, Jr.  
 CDR Charles A. Pendleton, Jr.  
 CDR William B. Barrow  
 CDR Richard J. Deprez  
 CDR John E. Hansen  
 CDR Robert E. Oechslein  
 CDR Max E. Malan  
 CDR Burton E. Berglund  
 CDR James D. Whyte  
 CDR Robert C. Frosio  
 CDR Gerald P. Barnett  
 CDR Austin C. O'Brien, Jr.  
 CDR Richard M. Fletcher  
 CDR Walter R. Petersen  
 CDR Daniel H. L. Gholson  
 LCDR Henry E. Nelson  
 CDR Anthony A. Less  
 CDR John F. Calhoun  
 CDR James M. Hickerson  
 CDR Gary W. Mau  
 CDR David R. Edwards  
 CDR Richard B. Curtis  
 CDR Robert A. Maier  
 CDR Audrey B. Whitten  
 CDR James M. Gill  
 CDR Micheal W. Samuels  
 CDR Harry M. Conner

15 Dec 1952  
 19 Aug 1953  
 Oct 1954  
 Aug 1955  
 Jan 1957  
 10 Jan 1958  
 22 Jan 1959  
 Mar 1960  
 18 Jun 1961  
 14 Jun 1962  
 14 Jun 1963  
 15 Jun 1964  
 30 Apr 1965  
 Apr 1966  
 18 Nov 1966  
 21 Nov 1967  
 Nov 1968  
 30 Sep 1969  
 10 Jul 1970  
 16 Jun 1971  
 30 Jun 1972  
 Oct 1973  
 1975  
 14 Feb 1976  
 10 May 1977  
 26 Jul 1978  
 1 Nov 1979  
 26 Feb 1981  
 19 May 1982  
 1 Oct 1983  
 21 May 1985

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AIR WING	TAILCODE	ASSIGNMENT DATE
CVG-4/CVAG-1/CVG-1*	T**	12 May 1945
CVG-10	AK	20 Jan 1958
CVG-1/CVW-1***	AB	5 Dec 1960
CVW-8	AJ	25 Aug 1968
CVW-7	AG	1971

\*CVG-4 was redesignated CVAG-1 on 15 November 1946 and CVG-1 on 1 September 1948.

\*\*CVG-4 assigned the tailcode T when it was assigned to the carrier USS Tarawa (CV-40) in January 1946.

\*\*\*Carrier Air Groups were redesignated Carrier Air Wings on 20 December 1963, hence, CVG-1 became CVW-1.

#### MAJOR OVERSEAS DEPLOYMENTS

Date of Departure	Date of Return	Air Wing	Carrier	Type of Aircraft	Area of Operation
28 Jun 1946	15 Jul 1946	CVG-4	CV-40	F4U-4	TRANSIT TO WEST COAST VIA PANAMA CANAL
1 Aug 1946	29 Apr 1947	CVG-4/ CVAG-1	CV-40	F4U-4	WESTPAC
1 Oct 1948	21 Feb 1949	CVG-1	CV-40	F8F-1	WORLD CRUISE
19 Mar 1951	6 Oct 1951	CVG-1	CVB-43	F2H-2	MED
24 May 1952	13 Oct 1952	CVG-1	CV-18	F2H-2	MED/NORLANT
11 Jun 1953	3 Dec 1953	CVG-1	CVA-42	F2H-2	MED
27 Dec 1954	14 Jul 1955	CVG-1	CVA-41	F2H-2	WORLD CRUISE
2 Sep 1958	12 Mar 1959	CVG-10	CVA-59	A4D-2	MED
6 Sep 1960	20 Oct 1960	CVG-10	CVA-38	A4D-2	NORLANT
14 Nov 1960	27 Nov 1960	CVG-10	CVA-38	A4D-2	CARIB
15 Feb 1961	28 Aug 1961	CVG-1	CVA-42	A4D-2	MED
19 Nov 1961	30 Nov 1961	CVG-1	CVA-42	A4D-2	CARIB
14 Sep 1962	22 Apr 1963	CVG-1	CVA-42	A4D-2N	MED
28 Apr 1964	22 Dec 1964	CVW-1	CVA-42	A-4C	MED
28 Jun 1965	17 Dec 1965	CVW-1	CVA-42	A-4E	MED
21 Jun 1966	21 Feb 1967	CVW-1	CVA-42	A-4E	WESTPAC/VIETNAM
24 Aug 1967	19 May 1968	CVW-1	CVA-42	A-4C	MED
7 Jan 1969	29 Jul 1969	CVW-8	CVA-38	A-4C	MED
5 Mar 1970	17 Dec 1970	CVW-8	CVS-38	A-4C	WESTPAC/VIETNAM
16 Sep 1971	16 Mar 1972	CVW-7	CVA-62	A-7E	NORLANT/MED
21 Jun 1973	19 Jan 1974	CVW-7	CVA-62	A-7E	MED
19 Jul 1974	21 Jan 1975	CVW-7	CV-62	A-7E	MED
15 Oct 1975	5 May 1976	CVW-7	CV-62	A-7E	NORLANT/MED
31 Mar 1977	21 Oct 1977	CVW-7	CV-62	A-7E	MED
16 Jan 1979	13 Jul 1979	CVW-7	CVN-69	A-7E	MED
15 Apr 1980	22 Dec 1980	CVW-7	CVN-69	A-7E	IO
20 Aug 1981	7 Oct 1981	CVW-7	CVN-69	A-7E	NORLANT
5 Jan 1982	13 Jul 1982	CVW-7	CVN-69	A-7E	MED
27 Apr 1983	2 Dec 1983	CVW-7	CVN-69	A-7E	MED
8 May 1984	20 Jun 1984	CVW-7	CVN-69	A-7E	NORLANT
10 Oct 1984	8 May 1985	CVW-7	CVN-69	A-7E	MED

#### AIRCRAFT ASSIGNMENT

Type of Aircraft	Date Type First Received
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F4U-1/1D and FG-1/1D	23 May 1945
F4U-4	30 Sep 1945
F8F-1/1B	May 1947
F6F-5P	May 1947
F2H-1	1 Sep 1950
F2H-2	Dec 1950
F7U-3	Dec 1955
A4D-1	Apr 1957
A4D-2	Jan 1958
A4D-2N (A-4C)*	8 Jan 1962
A-4E	8 Mar 1965
A-4C	9 Mar 1967
A-7E	1 Apr 1971

\*In 1962 the Navy's aircraft designation system was changed and the A4D-2N was redesignated the A-4C Skyhawk.

## CHRONOLOGY OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

5 Oct 1945: The squadron participated in an aerial parade over Washington, D.C. in honor of Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz. It also engaged in several other air parades and exhibition flights during the month of October.

6 Oct 1945: VBF-4's commanding officer, Lieutenant Commander Lackey, was killed during a training flight in an SNJ.

21 Aug-19 Sep and Nov-Dec 1946: The squadron operated ashore at Kobler Field, Saipan. Conducted training and preparations for special fleet exercises while shore based.

26 Apr 1952: The squadron was embarked in USS Wasp (CV-18) enroute to the Mediterranean when the carrier collided with the USS Hobson (DMS-26) which sank taking with her 176 men. There were no injuries to squadron personnel. The squadron's F2H-2s remained aboard until the Wasp entered dry dock at New York to repair her catapults which were damaged in the collision.

19 Aug 1953: While operating from USS Franklin D. Roosevelt (CVA-42) in the Mediterranean Sea Lieutenant Commander Breen was lost at sea.

Feb 1955: VA-12 supportrd the evacuation of National Chinese civilians and military personnel from the Tachen Islands which were being bombarded by the People's Republic of China.

1 Aug 1955: With the redesignation of VF-12 to VA-12 and the acquisition of a new type of aircraft in December 1955, the F7U Cutlass, the squadron's mission changed from jet intercept to special weapons attack.

14-27 Nov 1960: VA-12, embarked in USS Shangri-La (CVA-38), was part of the task force ordered to the coast of Central America to counter the infiltration of Cubans into Guatemala and Nicaragua.

21-27 Nov 1961: VA-12, embarked in Franklin D. Roosevelt, operated off the coast of the Dominican Republic to support the newly established democratic government.

Apr 1962: VA-12 was selected by CNO to conduct "Operation Trap", a test firing of Bullpup missiles to evaluate their usefulness to the Navy. The test firings took place while the squadron was based at their home port of NAS Cecil Field.

Jul-Aug 1963: A-4C detachments from the squadron operated aboard USS Essex (CVS-9) and USS Intrepid (CVS-11) as fighter support for anti-submarine exercises. These operations were also used to help develop and evaluate ASW tactics and doctrine.

8-29 Aug 1964: Franklin D. Roosevelt and its air wing were ordered to operate in the vicinity of Cyprus after fighting escalated between Turkish and Greek forces on the island.

Aug 1966: VA-12 flew its first combat sortie since its establishment 21 years earlier. The squadron completed its Vietnam deployment in December 1966 without sustaining any combat damage to its aircraft.

12 Nov 1966: VA-12's commanding officer, Commander Robert C. Frosio was lost at sea during flight operations from Franklin D. Roosevelt.

14 Dec 1966: Commander Barnett, commanding officer of VA-12, led a 42 plane strike against a heavily defended target in North Vietnam and for which he was awarded the Silver Star.

Oct-Dec 1973: Independence and VA-12 took station southeast of Crete after the outbreak of war between Israel, Egypt and Syria on 6 October 1973. During this period of operations the squadron conducted surveillance flights against a large Soviet fleet that had sortied from the Black Sea.

VA-12 aboard, was stationed off the coast of Crete. Tensions increased significantly on 19 August when the American Ambassador to Cyprus, Roger Davies, was killed by a Cypriot mob. The squadron prepared for possible assistance in the evacuation of American nationals. It flew surveillance of Greek, Turkish and Soviet naval and merchant activity in the area.

7 Sep 1974: The squadron participated in the search for victims of a TWA airliner crash in the Ionian Sea. No survivors were located.

15 Apr 1980: VA-12 deployed aboard USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN-69) to the Indian Ocean as a response to the Iran-American Embassy hostage situation. During the cruise VA-12 was at sea for 254 day with only one port call during the entire eight and one-half month deployment.

Jun, Aug and Sep 1983: VA-12 operated from Dwight D. Eisenhower while on station off the coast of Lebanon. The squadron flew in support of the Multi-National Peace Keeping Force stationed in Beirut.

23 Oct 1983: Dwight D. Eisenhower and her air wing returned to the coast of Beirut after 241 Marines died in a terrorist-suicide attack there.

1 Oct 1986: VA-12 was disestablished, bringing to a close the long history of the squadron and its motto "Kiss of Death".

#### UNIT AWARDS RECEIVED

Unit Award	Inclusive Dates Covering Unit Award	
NAVE	1 Jul 1964	30 Jun 1965
AFEM	06 Jun 1983	14 Jun 1983
	27 Jul 1983	30 Aug 1983
	01 Sep 1983	19 Oct 1983
	27 Oct 1983	20 Nov 1983
MUC	11 Apr 1970	06 Nov 1970
NEM	29 Apr 1980	16 Jul 1980
	22 Jul 1980	08 Dec 1980
	25 May 1983	27 May 1983
NUC	29 Apr 1980	10 Dec 1980
	21 Jul 1983	20 Nov 1983
VNSM	30 Jul 1966	
	09 Aug 1966	12 Sep 1966
	01 Oct 1966	03 Oct 1966
	19 Oct 1966	14 Nov 1966
	24 Nov 1966	28 Dec 1966
	20 Jan 1967	21 Jan 1967
	10 Apr 1970	02 May 1970
	12 May 1970	29 May 1970
	13 Jun 1970	04 Jul 1970
	28 Jul 1970	19 Aug 1970
	30 Aug 1970	30 Sep 1970
	20 Oct 1970	07 Nov 1970



2 Sep 1958  
Forrestal

A-4C

# HISTORY OF ATTACK SQUADRON TWELVE

## COMMANDING OFFICERS

OF

## ATTACK SQUADRON TWELVE

Attack Squadron TWELVE celebrated its twenty-second anniversary on 13 May 1967. In its varied and colorful history, the "Kiss of Death" squadron has flown from carriers of the Essex, Midway and Forrestal classes while sailing every major sea area in the world.

The "Flying Ubangis" were commissioned 12 May 1945 as Fighter Bomber Squadron Four flying first the F6-F Hellcats then the F4U Corsair. In 1947 the squadron was redesignated VF-2A flying F8F Bearcats, while the following year, now VF-12, the "Ubangis" made an around the world cruise aboard USS TARAWA. VF-12 reported to Cecil Field in March 1949 where it has since been homeported.

VF-12 received its first jet powered aircraft, the F2H-2 Banshee, in September 1950. The following year the VF-12 became the first jet day fighter squadron to carrier qualify at night.

The squadron received a new mission and new aircraft in 1955 when it was redesignated an Attack Squadron flying the F7U-1 Outlass. In 1957 VA-12 received its first Ahs in which it won first place at the AIRLANT weapons meet in 1959, followed the next year by winning 100 "E" awards for weapons delivery.

Following transition to the A4C the squadron commenced "Operation Trap" which was an evaluation of the Bullpup missile in 1962. More than 100 missiles were fired, and VA-12 logged the first measured Bullpup bullseyes. 1963 saw VA-12 receive the CNO Safety Award for an accident free year, a feat, repeated in 1965, for which the squadron received a meritorious achievement award. It was also this same year that saw VA-12 receive the COMNAVIAIRLANT Battle Readiness Efficiency Pennant and "E" award as the best light jet attack squadron in the Atlantic Fleet.

In June 1966, VA-12 drew its first combat assignment, deploying aboard the USS FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT (CVA42) to Southeast Asia. For the next six months the squadron participated in the intensive combat operations without damage to a plane or loss of a pilot, while logging two thousand combat hours on 1,068 missions. This represents a particularly unique award.

Early 1967 found the squadron preparing for its ninth deployment to Mediterranean waters preceded by "Operation Lashout." During this period the squadron transitioned back to A4C's which presently bear the world famous "Kiss of Death" symbol.

Lieutenant Commander John H. LACKEY	May 1945
Lieutenant Commander William L. CONLEY	October 1945
Lieutenant Commander Dick H. GUNN	June 1947
Lieutenant Commander Ronald W. HOEL	May 1948
Lieutenant Commander Albert W. NEWHALL, Jr.	May 1949
Commander Brainart T. MACOMBER	June 1950
Commander John L. CARTER	November 1951
Lieutenant Commander John M. BREEN (Lost at sea 13 August 1953)	December 1952
Lieutenant Commander Hamilton McWHORTER	August 1953
Commander Frederick C. KIDD	October 1954
Lieutenant Commander Joseph J. OLIVER	July 1955
Commander Paul H. DURANT	August 1955
Commander Marshall P. DEPUTY, Jr.	January 1957
Commander Charles A. PENDLETON, Jr.	10 January 1958
Commander William B. BARROW	22 January 1959
Commander Richard J. DEPREZ	March 1960
Commander John E. HANSEN	18 June 1961
Commander Robert E. OECHSLIN	14 June 1962
Commander Max E. MALAN	14 June 1963
Commander Burton E. BERGLUND	15 June 1964
Commander James D. WHITE	30 April 1965
Commander Robert C. FROSIO (Lost at sea 12 November 1966)	April 1966
Commander Gerald P. BARNETT	18 November 1966

Silver Star

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